


Multifocus: a system orientated approach of Gender Based Violence

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Background of Multi-focus (1/2)

- Two incidents with fatal outcome for two women
- Research revealed a **paradox**:
 - Victims often return to their perpetrators despite bringing themselves and their environment in danger.
 - Children seem to develop myths about their abusive parents and feel guilty themselves.

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Background of Multi-focus (2/2)


- Researching this paradox, we found out what the majority of our clients (families) really want:

Stop the violence, and preserve the relationship

Quotes:

“Despite everything, it is still my partner.”
“Despite everything, they are still my parents”


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Exploratory Research (1/3)

- Multifocus: an intervention derived from system theory in which one position “Violence stops!” is held.
- Since 2007 more than **800 cases** were treated with **Multifocus**.
- **Exploratory research** has identified several effective elements of Multifocus (Janssen et al, 2012; university of Tilburg, 2014).

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Exploratory Research (2/3)

Descriptive of the cases

- Nature of violence: 75% common couple violence, 17% intimate terrorism
- Perpetrator: 61% male, 20% female, 17% diffuse
- Children: almost always witness, in 35% (also) victim
- Duration of the case: in case of house bans in 1/3 > 1 year
- Violence in the family of origin (transgenerational violence) 70%

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Exploratory Research (3/3)

Outcome

- Risk of recidivism dropped sharply (9%, 15%)
- Increased probability of reporting to an imminent recurrence
- Chance of divorce reduced in common couple violence
- Probability of separation increased in case of intentional violence and intimate terrorism
- Chance of children being placed in foster care reduced

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Guiding principles

The cooperation between organizations is based on 10 guiding principles. The most important:

1. Violence stops
2. Safety comes first
3. Direct action is taken by a casemanager with 24-hour availability
4. The type of violence is recognized

It is important that organizations are capable to do what is needed, even when that means they have to put their own interests aside.

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What works? (1/4)

- Core: Casemanagement in the hands of one intensive casemanager
- Short-Term Perspective = safety
- Long-term perspective = making safe connections between family-members possible and breaking the transgenerational pattern

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What works? (2/4)

- System-Based Approach
- Cooperation based on shared values
- Speed of action
- Empowering the family
- Solution-oriented approach

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What works? (3/4)

- Application of skills and assistance techniques that are supportive and motivating
- Use of instruments
- Specific attention for the children
- Families are monitored for one year

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What works (4/4)

Within these phases, the intensive Casemanager uses the following instruments:

- Genogram and system analyses
- Hierarchy of Angel
- Psycho-education
- Intake Report and an a plan of action
- Family Conferences
- Reconciliation conversation
- Organizing assistance at cooperation partners
- Evaluation interviews

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Training Multifocus (1/3)

- A training to become an intensive casemanager
- Duration of the training: 12 months (blended learning).
 - 5 meetings of one day in the first six months,
 - 60 hour self-study,
 - a final meeting after 12 months.

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Training Multifocus (2/3)

Important elements of the training:

- How to be multiple-partisan
- Recognizing the circular patterns
- Recognizing violence typologies
- Knowledge of underlying processes concerning escalation and de-escalation
- Much attention goes towards the attitude of the intensive casemanager and the cooperation with relevant organizations

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Questions?

“Domestic Violence is a package deal. If you do not see the big picture, you are not as effective as you could be.”

Dr. Linda Chamberlain

ANY QUESTIONS?

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